

East Greenwich School Committee

Tuesday, January 26, 2010

East Greenwich High School Library

East Greenwich, RI 02818

ANY ITEMS ON THE AGENDA MAY BE SUBJECT TO A VOTE

The regular session of the East Greenwich School Committee was called to order in the East Greenwich High School Library at 6:17p.m. by Chair, Jean Ann Guliano. Those in attendance were: Anne Palumbo - Vice Chair; Deidre Gifford, Robert Durant, Susan Records, and Mary Ellen Winters, as well as Superintendent of Schools Dr. Victor Mercurio, Maryanne Crawford, Director of Administration, and Paula Dillon, Director of Student Services. Paul Martin was absent.

I. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Dr. Mercurio introduced Mr. Richard Maresca, the Interim Principal at Meadowbrook Farms School. Mr. Maresca spoke about his experience in Warwick before he retired. Mrs. Palumbo reported that teachers enjoy having him here. Dr. Mercurio reports the posting for principal closes on January 29th and he hopes to have someone in by March 1st.

6:15p.m. Executive Session, RIGL 42-46-5 (a) (2) Update on Fields Litigation

6:30p.m. Regular Meeting

II. Public Comments

Robin Kasparian, Prospect Street, spoke on behalf of Christina O'Day's sabbatical leave. She stated that Mrs. O'Day is requesting a sabbatical to go to Russia to immerse herself in the language and then come back to teach Russian in an after school program to the whole student body. Ms. Kasparian feels kids should be competitive by being able to take different languages. She feels this opportunity offers significant benefits at a low cost. Mrs. Lois Chavez, the Foreign Language Department Head, feels this is a way to provide foreign languages to students after school, not as formal instruction, but for an enrichment opportunity.

III. Action Items

1. Appointment

a. Mrs. Winters made a motion which was seconded by Mr. Durant to approve the appointment of Ann O'Grady, Cole Drama Club Advisor. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Parental leave

a. Mrs. Records made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Palumbo to approve the parental leave of Jennifer Shanahan, Speech and Language Pathologist, from January 15, 2010 to August 28, 2010. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Sabbatical Leave

a. Mr. Durant made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Palumbo to approve the sabbatical leave of Christina O'Day, from February 10 until the end of the school year, 6-18-10. Dr. Mercurio stated that Ms. O'Day is an outstanding teacher and feels students will benefit when she returns. He stated that family matters are not a part of the

sabbatical. Mr. Durant feels it is a good idea because Eastern languages help our school system. The cost is one half the teachers' salary and the cost of the substitute teacher for a half year. Mrs. Palumbo would like a plan for the after school program, not just a club or enrichment program. Mrs. Chavez stated that this program will be a club program free of charge. Ms. O'Day stated that the program will focus on reading and writing Russian. She will form a curriculum. She feels that some students are interested in Arabic and these classes will help with international business work. Mrs. Guliano feels it is a matter of timing and the School Committee usually receives these requests a semester in advance. Mrs. Winters is also concerned with the timing. Mrs. Records would support a leave of absence but she has a problem with the sabbatical because of the economic situation. The motion failed with Mr. Durant voting yes and Mrs. Guliano, Mrs. Palumbo, Mrs. Records, Mrs. Winters and Mrs. Gifford voting no. It was noted that Mrs. O'Day could come back with a leave of absence request.

4. Second Reading and Vote on Suspension Policy

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Mrs. Gifford read the draft policy. This is the second reading which has some new language offering services to the family also. Mr. Robert Houghtaling agreed with the changes. Mr. Durant made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Records to approve the policy. The motion passed unanimously. It was noted that the process for

approving policies needs to be cleaned up and a timeline set.

IV. The meeting continued with a School Committee Budget Workshop on the Special Education budget and adjourned at 10:15p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**Virginia Giuliani
Secretary**